

Message Text

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40

ACTION SY-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-05 ISO-00 AID-20 NEA-06 USPS-02 EB-05

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 USSS-00 FBIE-00 /059 W

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P R 051445Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5115

INFO AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 0184

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

PRETORIA FOR RSO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS BC, SF

SUBJ: DEATH OF SASO LEADER TIRO

REF: GABORONE 182

1. AID CONTRACT EMPLOYEE G.J. ERICKSON CALLED AT EMBASSY ON 5 FEB. TO STATE THAT HE HAD HANDLED PARCEL BOMB ADDRESSED TO TIRO TWICE ON WEDNESDAY, 30 JANUARY. ERICKSON SAID PARCEL WAS APPROXIMATELY TWO INCHES BY THREE INCHES AND SEVEN INCHES LONG AND SEEMED LIGHT - APPROX WEIGHT ABOUT FIVE OR SIX OUNCES. PARCEL WAS NEATLY WRAPPED AND SEALED WITH CLEAR TAPE ON THE ENDS AND THEN TIED WITH STRING. ERICKSON STATED THAT PACKAGE HAD THE STANDARD BLUE-GREEN INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS DECLARATION ATTACHED BUT HE DOES NOT REMEMBER WHAT WAS STATED UNDER THE HEADING "CONTENTS". HE DOES NOT REMEMBER ANY STAMPS ON THE PACKAGE. HE ALSO BELIEVES THE PARCEL WAS POSTED FROM GENEVA, SWITZERLAND ALTHOUGH HE NOT CERTAIN OF

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THIS.

2. ERICKSON RECEIVED PACKAGE BECAUSE ALTHOUGH IT WAS ADDRESSED TO TIRO, THE P.O. BOX WAS WRITTEN IN LONGHAND AND APPEARED TO BE A ONE FOLLOWED BY THE LETTER Z, WHICH COULD ALSO PASS FOR THE NUMBER THREE. THE P.O. BOX FOR ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE IS 13, BUT SOMEONE CROSSED OUT THE P.O. BOX AND WROTE PRIVATE BAG 13 - THE ADDRESS FOR ERICKSON'S INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT. THE PARCEL WAS BROUGHT TO ERICKSON'S OFFICE ON 30 JANUARY BECAUSE THE NAME OF THE SENDER APPEARED TO BE "ERIKSSON". HE DOES NOT REMEMBER THE RETURN ADDRESS. ERICKSON SENT THE PARCEL BACK BUT THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER IN THE INCOME TAX DEPT. RETURNED WITH IT LATER ON THE 30TH. ERICKSON EXAMINED THE PARCEL WITH THE ADMIN OFFICE AND THEY DECIDED NOT TO OPEN IT. ERICKSON BELIEVES THAT THE PARCEL WAS RETURNED TO THE CENTRAL POST OFFICE ON THURSDAY, 31 JANUARY. NOTE- TIRO APPARENTLY RECEIVED THE PACKAGE ON FRIDAY, 1 FEBRUARY.

3. HEAD OF BOTSWANA CID CALLED ON ERICKSON ON 5 FEB. AND TOOK HIS STATEMENT. IF ERICKSON RECEIVED PARCEL ON JAN. 30 IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT IT ARRIVED IN GABORONE ON THUESDAY THE 29TH. ERICKSON DOES NOT REMEMBER ANY AIRMAIL MARKINGS BUT DID COMMENT THAT IT WAS ONLY PARCEL HE HAS RECEIVED OR SEEN SINCE HIS ARRIVAL IN BOTSWANA NINE MONTHS AGO THAT HAD NOT BEEN OPENED BY SOUTH AFRICAN CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES FOR INSPECTION.

4. DIRECTOR OF GOB POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS HAS INFORMED THE EMBASSY THE FRAGMENTS OF PARCEL RECOVERED INCLUDE TWO SWISS POSTAGE STAMPS AND PART OF THE ADDRESS (INCLUDING THE NUMBER THIRTEEN). IN SEEMS THAT THE STAMPS WERE CANCELLED BY A RUBBER STAMP AFTER BEING AFFIXED TO THE PACKAGE AS PART OF THE CANCEL- LATION APPEARED ON THE WRAPPING PAPER. IT NOT POSSIBLE DECIPHER CANCELATION HERE AND PACKAGE FRAGMENTS HAVE BEEN SENT TO SA POLICE LAB IN PRETORIA FOR ANALYSIS. HE ADDED THAT THE BOMB APPARENTLY CONSTRUCTED TO EXPLODE WHENEVER PACKAGE RIPPED OR OPENED AND THAT A MUCH LARGER CHARGE WAS USED THAN IS NORMALLY THE CASE WITH LETTER BOMBS.

5. THERE IS SOME SPECULATION THAT THE BOMB WAS CONSTRUCTED IN AND MAILED FROM SOUTH AFRICA. BOTSWANA OFFICIALS HOPEFUL THAT LAB TESTS IN PRETORIA WILL SHED SOME LIGHT ON THIS
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THEORY. NELSON

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 05 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
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Errors: N/A
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